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February 18, 2020

Ms. Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write to offer my full support for Washington County and the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration's (MDOT SHA) Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) joint grant funding application for the I-81/Halfway Boulevard Freight Connection Project. This project will improve operational capacity and mobility needs, as well as address critical safety concerns along this designated freight corridor in our rural, Appalachian region. By providing funding to complete Phase 2 of I-81, it also completes a long-planned county road that connects Interstate 81 with MD 63 via Halfway Boulevard, unlocking business development opportunities and providing alternative routes for freight traffic to both I-81 and I-70. This project will ensure Washington County is able to attract new businesses and retain existing ones.

Maryland's I-81 corridor no longer meets system performance requirements, resulting in a disruptive bottleneck negatively affecting the freight movement in a corridor estimated to carry 12 percent of the Country's Gross Domestic Product per year. The Maryland portion of I-81 alone carries more than 19,400 trucks per day, which falls within the top one percent of truck volume by lane mile in the nation. Receiving this grant funding will help maintain the I-81 corridor's position as a national asset for freight movement for the next several decades. In addition to supporting the thousands of jobs already in the corridor, it will enable the development of new business parks and provide greater access to truck parking, a much-needed resource along the I-81 and I-70 corridors.

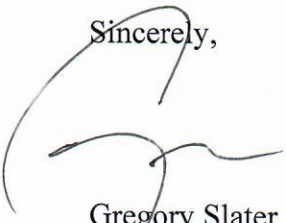
I urge you to favorably consider this regionally and nationally significant project and invest in this critical effort to advance freight connections in rural Maryland. Approving this grant will allow the I-81/Halfway Boulevard Freight Connection project to begin within 11 months and ensure substantial completion two and one-half years after the notice to proceed.

Ms. Elaine L. Chao
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The MDOT SHA is prepared to commit its required grant funding match. This application is reflective of a strong partnership among Washington County, the MDOT SHA, and the private sector to leverage available resources to implement a priority project.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any additional questions, you may contact Mr. Jeff Stockdale, MDOT Federal Legislative Officer, at 410-865-1096 or jstockdale@mdot.maryland.gov. Mr. Stockdale will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,



Gregory Slater
Acting Secretary

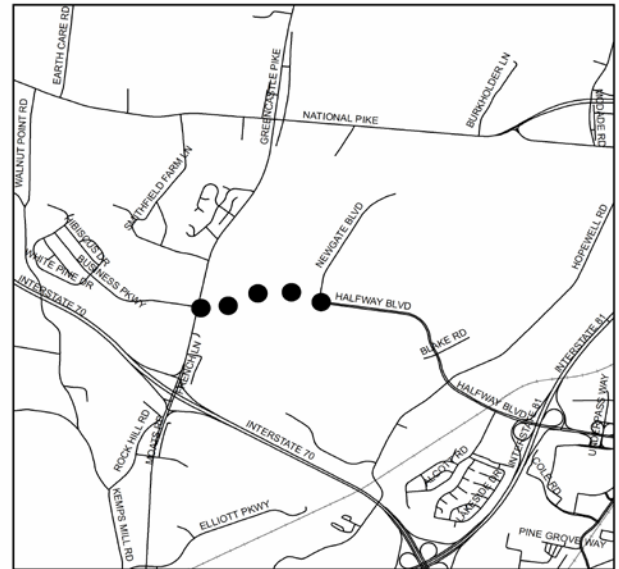
cc: Mr. Scott Hobbs, Director, Division of Engineering, Washington County
Mr. Jeff Stockdale, Federal Legislative Officer, MDOT

Project Title **Halfway Boulevard Extended Phase I**

Project ID RDI069

Full-time Employees 0

Operating Costs \$2,000



Project Description The project involves the construction of a new four lane open section roadway connecting Halfway Boulevard Extended to MD Route 63. Intersection improvements at Halfway Boulevard extended and MD Route 63 include a traffic signal.

Project Assumptions An ARC grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 is being secured for this project. This project is receiving developer contributions for improvements.

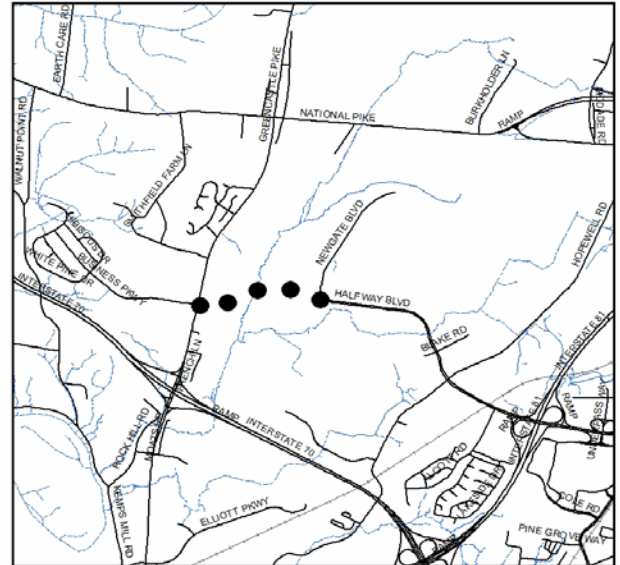
Project Justification The project is needed to provide additional road capacity and alternate routes resulting from continued and forecasted development in this area. The project provides an alternate access route to MD Route 63 and Interstate 70 for heavy truck traffic from industrial park on Halfway Boulevard Extended.

	Total	Prior Appr.	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Future
Project Costs:									
Construction	2,100,000	800,000	1,000,000	300,000	0	0	0	0	0
Engineering and Design	100,000	100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inspection	149,000	0	0	149,000	0	0	0	0	0
Total Cost	2,349,000	900,000	1,000,000	449,000	0	0	0	0	0
Funding Sources:									
Tax-Supported Bond	249,000	100,000	0	149,000	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Grant	1,800,000	800,000	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contributions	300,000	0	0	300,000	0	0	0	0	0
Total Funding	2,349,000	900,000	1,000,000	449,000	0	0	0	0	0

Project Title **Halfway Boulevard Extended Bridge / Phase II**

Full-time Employees 0

Operating Costs \$0



Project Description The project involves the construction of a new bridge and a portion of the four lane roadway connecting Halfway Boulevard Extended to MD Route 63.

Project Assumptions The project is currently planned for two phases (Phase II and Bridge/Phase III). This project assumes developer contribution for a portion of the bridge/road cost.

Project Justification The project is needed to provide additional road capacity and alternate routes resulting from continued and forecasted development in this area. The project provides an alternate access route to MD Route 63 and Interstate 70 for heavy truck traffic from industrial park on Halfway Boulevard Extended.

	Total	Prior Appr.	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Future
<u>Project Costs:</u>									
Construction	3,000,000	0	0	0	1,200,000	0	0	1,800,000	0
Inspection	200,000	0	0	0	100,000	0	0	100,000	0
Total Cost	3,200,000	0	0	0	1,300,000	0	0	1,900,000	0
<u>Funding Sources:</u>									
Tax-Supported Bond	1,200,000	0	0	0	300,000	0	0	900,000	0
Federal Grant	2,000,000	0	0	0	1,000,000	0	0	1,000,000	0
Total Funding	3,200,000	0	0	0	1,300,000	0	0	1,900,000	0



APPALACHIAN
REGIONAL
COMMISSION

*A Proud Past,
A New Vision*

PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENT

Project Title/No.: Halfway Boulevard Extension, Phase II (MD-19114-2018-I-201b)

Grantee: Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, MD

Local Contact: Mr. Scott Hobbs
240-313-2407

Congressional District: 6

Funding:

ARC:	\$2,000,000
Other Federal:	-0-
State:	-0-
Local:	-0-
Total	\$2,000,000

FEB 21 2018

WASHINGTON, D.C.--The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) today approved \$2,000,000 for Board of County Commissioners of Washington County to construct Halfway Boulevard Extension, Phase II, in Washington County, MD. ARC funds will be used to construct approximately 0.19 miles of four lane open section local access road extending the existing Halfway Boulevard Phase I termination point west towards Maryland Route 63. The proposed project will spur commercial development on land surrounding the new road and alleviate growing traffic congestion in the area while improving connectivity between I-70, I-81 and existing nearby commercial/industrial areas. The new roadway is essential for a plan to develop surrounding land into a business park with over 1.4 million square feet of commercial space. It is estimated that this project will support the creation of 394 new jobs.

The Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA) will administer the project and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will serve as the basic federal agency for the project.

Ms. Elaine L. Chao

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bcc: Mr. R. Earl Lewis, Jr., Deputy Secretary of Policy, Planning, and Enterprise Services,
MDOT
Ms. Michelle D. Martin, Deputy Director, Office of Planning and Capital Programming,
MDOT
Ms. Heather Murphy, Director, Office of Planning and Capital Programming, MDOT
Mr. Sean Powell, Deputy Secretary of Operations and Homeland Security, MDOT
Mr. Jeff Tosi, Director, Office of Government Affairs, MDOT

Jeffrey A. Cline, *President*
Terry L. Baker, *Vice President*
Krista L. Hart, *Clerk*



Wayne K. Keefer
Cort F. Meinelschmidt
Randall E. Wagner

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

February 19, 2020

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant Program.

Dear Secretary Chao:

The Washington County Board of County Commissioners would like to convey the concerns that citizens, business owners, and emergency operations employees of Washington County have with the inadequate 12.08 miles of Interstate 81 connecting West Virginia to Pennsylvania through Washington County. The Board is partnering with the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) to widen I-81 in Maryland to six lanes.

The safety and economic concerns of the I-81 corridor line up with the 4 part plan Governor Hogan initiated in 2019 called "Foundation for Success". The themes and impacts to Washington County of the 4-part plan are listed below.

- **Getting to work:** Accidents on the interstate delay people from getting to work or home and delay supplies reaching businesses. From January 2010 to September 2018, 493 reportable crashes occurred within Maryland's I-81 corridor. This resulted in 168 injuries and four fatalities.
- **Enhancing efficiency:** The current inadequacy of I-81 negatively impacts travelers' and businesses' productivity. An accident on I-81 affects secondary road traffic, increasing traffic volume and the potential for spillover accidents. Furthermore, depending on the length of the accident and the backlog of traffic, sales of retail establishments and restaurants decrease.
- **Strengthening security and resiliency:** The interstate is partially or completely closed when an accident occurs. The infrastructure of the roads affects the ability of emergency responders to access the accident site. Furthermore, traveler safety is diminished by the potential for subsequent accidents, and traveler efficiency is hampered due to the time experts need to reconstruct an accident.

lodging in Washington County. More than \$109,000- per day is contributed by travelers using I-81. In Washington County, tourism makes up to eight to ten percent (8–10%) of the work force.

The Washington County Board of County Commissioners and MDOT SHA have partnered to seek your support for the INFRA Grant of \$55 million. The County has committed \$1,000,000 in funding to support the widening of Interstate 81.

Our citizens, area businesses, and the travelling public deserve safe passage on an interstate with adequate capacity to support current traffic volume. Please support this necessary and worthy interstate widening project.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: 
Jeffrey A. Cline, President

cc: Board of County Commissioners
Kirk C. Downey, Interim County Administrator



The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We are writing you to express our support for Washington County and the Maryland Department of Transportation State High Way Administration (MDOT SHA) application for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program for the I-81/Halfway Boulevard Freight Connection Project. As a local development and trucking company, we understand the importance of sound infrastructure and public/private partnerships.

Bowman Group contains businesses which began in Washington County in 1959. Each of the industries contained within Bowman Group is widely affected by the I-81 Corridor and we have concerns that without the necessary widening, it could become detrimental to our business. Two businesses affected at large include a top 200 carrier, D.M. Bowman Inc. Trucking, and the largest real estate development company in Washington County, Bowman Development.


D.M. Bowman Inc. trucking company depends heavily on the Interstate to provide safe and efficient travel. The current I-81 Corridor in Maryland no longer meets system performance requirements which creates disruptive bottlenecks and negatively affects the movement of freight. The suggested improvements will also improve safety by the reconstruction of exit ramps to create safer merging and exiting. This project would allow MDOT SHA to proceed steadily with the I-81 Corridor Widening project and to allow one of the country's busiest and most congested freight corridors to keep pace with future traffic growth.

As the largest real estate developer in Washington County, Bowman Development is greatly affected by the I-81 widening project. Along with our other numerous investments, we are currently investing \$25M into a 765,000 SF warehouse expansion within a mile of I-81 with a completion date of April 1, 2020. The success of this project will depend on the continued efficient and safe traffic flow on I-81.

While completing our newest warehouse, we are also committed to invest \$750,000 into Halfway Boulevard Extended as part of a private/public partnership for future development. If awarded the grant, the scope of Phase 2 will increase the widening from the end of Phase 1 in West Virginia to the Halfway interchange, including an extension of Halfway Blvd to RT 63. The expansion in this area will spur commercial development surrounding the road and alleviate traffic issues in the area. This project will also improve connectivity between Interstates 70 and 81 and existing nearby commercial/industrial areas. We have submitted a concept for this site that could potentially accommodate 1.4 million square feet of commercial/industrial buildings.

We appreciate your consideration for the I-81 Phase 2 Corridor Widening Project and MDOT SHA's request for BUILD grant funding. We hope you see the impact that our roadways have not only on our business but commercial real estate and trucking as a whole. If you have any questions in regards to our support for this project, please contact us.

Sincerely,



Donald M. Bowman
Founder and CEO
The Bowman Group